

I can't see well enough from this
seat. The Face of the Present peers
in the window sporting a tragic
Humphrey Bogart leer. Applause signs
flash on, standing ovations ensue,
a culture goes insane with delight
and I'm left waiting for the next
bus due in soon from Anywhere, U.S.A.
O muse, with breasts like stereo
typewriters, skin like erasable bond,
where are you when you need me?

-- Joel Dailey

New Orleans LA

LETTER FOR HENRY: POÈME TROUVÉ (1981)

This notification of eligibility
has been specially prepared for:

H.D. Thoreau
Thoreau Lyceum
156 Belknap Street
Concord, Massachusetts 01742

Yes, MR. HENRY DAVID THOREAU,
you already may have won
the grand prize
in this year's Reader's Digest Sweepstakes.
Just think of it!
Walking to your mailbox
in CONCORD
and finding there made out to YOU
a certified check for \$100,000.
You could pay off all your bills,
invest for the future,
and still have plenty left
to treat the THOREAU family
to some pretty fancy luxuries.

Or:

How about one of these colossal prizes?
A G.E. 1000 Giant-Screen TV!
A Sumptuous Bourbon-Toned Mink Coat!
A 33' Morgan Sailing Yacht!

A European Holiday For Two!
A Customized Cobra Motorhome!

If you roll down BELKNAP STREET
in a brand new Cadillac Seville
loaded with options
or in a sporty, red Corvette --
a car you pay for in cash --
imagine the look on the faces of your neighbors!

JELLY ROLL BLUES

"'Ol man Harveys too doggone ol t think erbout
jelly-roll,' said Big Boy."

-- "Big Boy Leaves Home" by Richard Wright

Having trundled his wheelchair,
wooden, rickety,
to the shady end of the porch,
having heeded, for a spell,
the dry, rude drone of cicadas,
Old Man Harvey
stares into the windless trees,
mutters in his white and bosky beard,
thinking about jelly roll.
In a reverie which is itself
as sweet, as light, as a confection,
he thinks of kneading the bare dough,
pressing it out, gently, with both hands,
of preparing the smooth pan,
working the grease on slowly,
not missing the firm lips of edges.
He muses on the oven faintly humming, heating up,
on the dough swelling, rising, turning spongy.
He fancies testing with a fingertip.
And there at last he is,
wielding a pastry tube thick as a cream horn,
spreading jelly, tart and sticky,
filling the hot folds,
and rolling,
rolling.

-- Donald Kummings

Kenosha WI